



Joining forces with the nationwide [Click It or Ticket](#) Mobilization, running from May 23 to June 5, local law enforcement officers across Virginia will increase enforcement of the State's safety belt laws. Those who fail to buckle up will be issued a ticket that carries a large fine.

The goal of the effort is to boost the State's safety belt use rate and reduce fatalities, with a special emphasis on young adults. Motor vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for every age, 3 through 33, in the United States. The past few years have shown a significant increase in safety belt use, but more must be done

to sustain and grow these gains.

Safety belt use saves lives and prevents injuries. Between 1975 and 2000, safety belts prevented 135,000 fatalities and 3.8 million injuries, saving \$585 billion in medical and other costs. If all vehicle occupants had used safety belts during that period, nearly 315,000 deaths and 5.2 million injuries could have been prevented – and \$913 billion in costs saved.

"Because we've seen first hand the severe injury and death that often result from not wearing a safety belt, we will be showing zero tolerance for anyone not buckled up. Unless you want to risk a ticket – or worse, your life – remember to wear your belt," said Sheriff Charlie Ray Fox, Jr. "We want everyone on the road to remember to buckle up – every trip, every time."

For the past several years, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has helped states implement the *Click It or Ticket* program across the country, aiding law enforcement agencies in

conducting intensive, high-publicity *Click It or Ticket* campaigns with increased enforcement of safety belt laws.

These *Click It or Ticket* efforts are an effective tool in raising safety belt use rates. In 2004, the Mobilization efforts helped to increase the national belt use rate to a record high of 80 percent. The combination of active law enforcement, coupled with paid advertising and the support of government agencies, local schools, community organizations and others, continues to be an extremely effective means for increasing safety belt use – and saving lives – across the country.

More than 12,000 law enforcement agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico will conduct safety belt checkpoints and other special law enforcement activities as part of the effort.

